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Angels

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Q: Could you give us some information about the angels?

A: Praise be to Allaah.

Allaah created the angels from light. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: «The angels were created from light, the jinn were created from smokeless fire, and Adam was created from that which has been described to you» [narrated by Muslim, 2996].

The angels are by nature obedient to Allaah:

"[they, i.e., angels] disobey not, (from executing) the Commands they receive from Allaah, but do that which they are commanded" [al-Tahreem 66:6 - interpretation of the meaning].

{لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ}

Transliteration: Lā Ya`ṣūna Allāha Mā 'Amarahum Wa Yaf' alūna Mā Yu'umarūna

They are created in such a way that they do not eat or drink. Their food is tasbeeh (glorification of Allaah) and tahleel (saying Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah), as Allaah tells us concerning them (interpretation of the meaning):

"They (i.e. the angels) glorify His Praises night and day, (and) they never slacken (to do so) [al-Anbiyaa' 21:20].

{وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُونَ}

Transliteration: Wa Man `Indahu Lā Yastakbirūna `An `Ibādātihi Wa Lā Yastaḥsirūna

The angels bear witness to the Oneness of Allaah, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Allaah bears witness that Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), and the angels, and those having knowledge (also give this witness); (He always) maintains His creation in justice. Laa ilaaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the All-Mighty, the All-Wise" [Aal 'Imraan 3:18].

{شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ}

Transliteration: Shahida Allāhu 'Annahu Lā 'Ilāha 'Illā Huwa Wa Al-Malā'ikatu Wa 'Ūlū Al-'Ilmi Qā'imāan Bi-l-Qisṭi Lā 'Ilāha 'Illā Huwa Al-'Azīzu Al-Ḥakīmu

Allaah has honoured some of the angels by choosing them as Messengers, just as He has chosen some of mankind as Messengers:

"Allaah chooses Messengers from angels and from men" [al-Hajj 22:75 - interpretation

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of the meaning].

{اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ}

Transliteration: Allāhu Yaṣṭafī Mina Al-Malā'ikati Rusulāan Wa Mina An-Nāsi

When Allaah created Adam and He wanted to honour him, He commanded the angels to prostrate to him:

"And (remember) when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate yourselves before Adam.' And they prostrated except Iblees (Satan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allaah)" [al-Baqarah 2:34 - interpretation of the meaning].

{وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ}

Transliteration: Wa 'Idh Qulnā Lilmalā'ikati Asjudū Li'adama Fasajadū 'Illā 'Iblīsa 'Ab´ Wa Astakbara Wa Kāna Mina Al-Kāfirīna

The angels are a mighty creation, and they perform many tasks, and they are divided into many groups, which no one knows except Allaah. Some of them carry the Throne: "Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allaah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah)..." [Ghaafir 40:7 - interpretation of the meaning].

{الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا}

Transliteration: Al-Ladhīna Yaḥmilūna Al-'Arsha Wa Man Ḥawlahu Yusabbiḥūna Biḥamdi Rabbihim Wa Yu'uminūna Bihi Wa Yastaghfirūna Lilladhīna 'Āmanū

Among them is the one who brings down the Revelation to the Messengers. He is Jibreel (peace be upon him), who brought the Qur'aan down to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him):

"Which the trustworthy Rooh [Jibreel (Gabriel)] has brought down

Upon your heart (O Muhammad) that you may be (one) of the warners" [al-Shu'araa 26:193-194 - interpretation of the meaning].

{نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ (193) عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ}

Transliteration: Nazala Bihi Ar-Rūḥu Al-'Amīnu, 'Al´ Qalbika Litakūna Mina Al-Mundhirīna

Among them is Mikaa'eel, who is appointed in charge of the rain and vegetation, and Israafeel who is appointed to blow the Trumpet when the Hour begins. And among them are the recording angels who are appointed to watch over the sons of Adam and their deeds:

"But verily, over you (are appointed angels in charge of mankind) to watch you,

Kiraaman (Honourable) Kaatibeen -writing down (your deeds),

They know all that you do" [al-Infitaar :10-12 - interpretation of the meaning].

{وَإِنْ عَلَيْكُمْ لِحَافِظِينَ (10) كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ (11) يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ}

Transliteration: Wa 'Inna 'Alaykum Laḥāfiẓīna, Kirāmāan Kātibīna, Ya'lamūna Mā Taf'alūna

Among them are those who are entrusted with the task of writing down all deeds, whether good or evil:

"(Remember) that the two receivers (recording angels) receive (each human being), one sitting on the right and one on the left (to note his or her actions)

Not a word does he (or she) utter but there is a watcher by him ready (to record it)" [Qaaf 50:17-18 - interpretation of the meaning].

{إِذْ يَتَلَفَّى الْمُتَلَفِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشَّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ (17) مَا يُلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ}

Transliteration: 'Idh Yatalaqq´ Al-Mutalaqqiyāni 'Ani Al-Yamīni Wa 'Ani Ash-Shimāli Qa'idun, Mā Yalfiẓu Min Qawlin 'Illā Ladayhi Raqībun 'Atīdun

Among them are those who are entrusted with the task of seizing the souls of the believers:

"Those whose lives the angels take while they are in a pious state (i.e. pure from all evil, and worshipping none but Allaah Alone) saying (to them): Salaamun 'Alaykum (peace be on you) enter you Paradise, because of that (the good) which you used to do (in the world)" [al-Nahl 16:32 - interpretation of the meaning].

{الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ}

Transliteration: Al-Ladhīna Tatawaffāhumu Al-Malā'ikatu Ṭayyibīna Yaqūlūna Salāmun `Alaykumu Adkhulū Al-Jannata Bimā Kuntum Ta`malūna

And among them are those who are entrusted with the task of seizing the souls of the disbelievers:

"And if you could see when the angels take away the souls of those who disbelieve (at death); they smite their faces and their backs, (saying): 'Taste the punishment of the blazing Fire'" [al-Anfaal 8:50 - interpretation of the meaning].

{وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ}

Transliteration: Wa Law Taráacute; Idh Yatawaffáacute; Al-Ladhīna Kafarū Al-Malā'ikatu Yaḍribūna Wujūhahum Wa `Adbārahum Wa Dhūqū `Adhāba Al-Ḥarīqi

Among them are the gatekeepers of Paradise and the servants of the people of Paradise:

"And angels shall enter unto them from every gate (saying):

Salaamun 'Alaykum (peace be upon you) for you persevered in patience! Excellent indeed is the final home!" [al-Ra'd 13:23-24 - interpretation of the meaning].

{وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ (23) سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ}

Transliteration: Wa Al-Malā'ikatu Yadhkhulūna `Alayhim Min Kulli Bābin, Salāmun `Alaykum Bimā Ṣabartum Fani`ma `Uqbáacute; Ad-Dāri

And among them are the gatekeepers of Hell:

"O you who believe! Ward off yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe" [al-Tahreem 66:6 - interpretation of the meaning].

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا} {أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ}

Transliteration: Yā 'Ayyuhā Al-Ladhīna `Āmanū Qū 'Anfusakum Wa 'Ahlīkum Nārāan Waqūduhā An-Nāsu Wa Al-Ḥijāratu `Alayhā Malā'ikatun Ghilāḏun Shidādun Lā Ya`ṣūna Allāha Mā 'Amarahum Wa Yaf`alūna Mā Yu'umarūna

Among them are some who strive in jihaad with the believers:

"(Remember) when your Lord revealed to the angels, 'Verily, I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved, so strike them over the necks, and smite over all their fingers and toes'" [al-Anfaal 8:12 - interpretation of the meaning].

{إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبَّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَأَلَفِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرَّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ} {وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ}

Transliteration: 'Idh Yūḥī Rabbuka 'Iláacute; Al-Malā'ikati 'Annī Ma`akum Fathabbitū Al-Ladhīna `Āmanū Sa`ulqī Fī Qulūbi Al-Ladhīna Kafarū Ar-Ru`ba Fāḍribū Fawqa Al-'A`nāqi Wa Aḍribū Minhum Kulla Banānin

On Laylat al-Qadr in the month of Ramadaan, the angels come down to witness goodness with the Muslims, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"The Night of Al-Qadr (Decree) is better than a thousand months (i.e. worshipping Allaah in that night is better than worshipping Him a thousand months, i.e. 83 years and 4 months).

Therein descend the angels and the Rooh [Jibreel (Gabriel)] by Allaah's Permission

with all Decrees" [al-Qadr 97:3-4].

{لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ (3) تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ}

Transliteration: Laylatu Al-Qadri Khayrun Min 'Alfi Shahrin, Tanazzalu Al-Malā'ikatu Wa Ar-Rūḥu Fīhā Bi'idhni Rabbihim Min Kulli 'Amrin

The angels do not enter a house in which there is a statue, picture (image) or a dog. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: «The angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or an image» [Narrated by Muslim, 2106].

Belief in the angels is one of the pillars of faith, and whoever denies it is a kaafir: "and whosoever disbelieves in Allaah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day, then indeed he has strayed far away" [al-Nisaa' 4:136 - interpretation of the meaning].

{وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا}

Transliteration: Wa Man Yakfur Billāhi Wa Malā'ikatihi Wa Kutubihi Wa Rusulihi Wa Al-Yawmi Al-'Ākhiri Faqad Ḍalla Ḍalālāan Ba`ṭdāan

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